

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22

INTRODUCED BY PETERSON, BALES, WITT, L. JONES, BUTCHER, ROSS, LAMBERT, WISEMAN,
MALCOLM, KEANE, RICE, ANDERSEN

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO DIRECT THE APPROPRIATE FEDERAL AGENCIES TO EXPEDITE THE ELIMINATION OF BRUCELLOSIS IN THE ~~YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK~~ GREATER YELLOWSTONE AREA BISON AND ELK HERDS, AND IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT, AND URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO NAME THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AS THE LEAD AGENCY IN AN ELIMINATION PLAN.

WHEREAS, an essential element of proper wildlife management is the maintenance of healthy animal populations; and

WHEREAS, the disease brucellosis (~~Brucella abortus~~), AND THE CAUSATIVE ORGANISM BRUCELLA ABORTUS, has been known to be present in the Yellowstone National Park bison herd for over ~~80~~ 87 years; and

WHEREAS, the bison population of Yellowstone National Park is now ~~in excess of~~ NEARLY 4,500 bison, WELL OVER THE POPULATION TARGET OF 3,000 BISON; and

WHEREAS, in the ~~1999-2000~~ 2000 final environmental impact statement for the interagency bison management plan for the State of Montana and Yellowstone National Park, one of the objectives was to commit to the eventual elimination of brucellosis in bison and other wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the State of Montana, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of the Interior agreed in a 1995 memorandum of understanding that an objective was to plan for the elimination of brucellosis from the greater Yellowstone area by the year 2010; and

WHEREAS, cattle herds in Idaho and Wyoming have been infected with brucellosis by elk ~~from Yellowstone National Park~~ IN THE GREATER YELLOWSTONE AREA, resulting in significant economic loss to local economies; and

WHEREAS, Yellowstone National Park bison that have been infected with or exposed to brucellosis and GREATER YELLOWSTONE AREA elk that may have been infected with or exposed to brucellosis frequently make nomadic or migratory movements into Montana, threatening the health of Montana citizens as well as the state's

1 livestock industry and brucellosis class-free status; and

2 WHEREAS, for years, Montana has been forced to react to the nomadic movements of bison from
3 Yellowstone National Park into Montana with costly management measures, including hazing, capturing, and
4 lethally removing bison, to protect the health and welfare of Montana citizens and the livestock industry; and

5 WHEREAS, elimination of brucellosis in the ~~Yellowstone National Park~~ GREATER YELLOWSTONE AREA
6 bison and elk herds, AND IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT, would mitigate a public health and animal health concern and
7 reduce ongoing state expenses related to the nomadic movement of bison from Yellowstone National Park; and

8 WHEREAS, a brucellosis vaccination PROGRAM for bison is being developed and should be implemented
9 in the Yellowstone National Park wild bison ~~and elk herds~~ HERD as soon as possible as a critical component of
10 any ongoing eradication strategy.

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12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
13 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

14 That the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and the U.S. Secretary of the Interior be urged to direct the U.S.
15 Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services Office, the National
16 Park Service, and any other affected federal agencies to undertake the expeditious elimination of brucellosis
17 in the ~~Yellowstone National Park~~ GREATER YELLOWSTONE AREA bison and elk herds, AND IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT,
18 by developing and implementing a brucellosis elimination program, and that the President of the United States
19 be urged to name the United States Department of Agriculture as the lead federal agency for the development
20 of an elimination plan.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any federal brucellosis elimination program be developed in
22 coordination with Montana state veterinarians and the Montana Department of Livestock to ensure that state and
23 federal programs continue to protect the health and welfare of Montana citizens, Montana wildlife, and the
24 Montana livestock industry.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent by the Secretary of State to the
26 members of the Montana Congressional Delegation, the President of the United States, the U.S. Secretary of
27 Agriculture, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, and the Director of the National Park Service.

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